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**TUVALU NATIONAL REPORT**  
**TO THE**  
**THIRD INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SMALL ISLAND**  
**DEVELOPING STATES**

Apia, Samoa, June, 2014.

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## **Acronyms**

BPOA	Barbados Programme of Action
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women
DCC	Development Coordinating Committee
RTK II	Revised Te Kakeega II
TK II	Te Kakeega II
GER	Gender Enrolment Ratio
GPI	Gender Parity Index
GDI	Gender Development Index
GOT	Government of Tuvalu
HDI	Human Development Index
IMR	Infant mortality rate
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
SD	Sustainable Development
SDF	Special Development Fund
STI	Sexually Transmitted Infection
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MSI	Mauritius Strategy of Implementation
NGO	Non Government Organization
NSDS	National Sustainable Development Strategy
TANGO	Tuvalu Association of Non Government Organizations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational and Social Organization
UNICEF	United Nations International Children Educational Fund
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNFPA	United Nations Family Planning Association
U5MR	Under five mortality rate
WHO	World Health Organization

## Introduction

This is the report on the status of sustainable development (SD) in Tuvalu. Good progress has been achieved in the pursuit of sustainable development as the country follows the strategies recommended by the international community for small island developing states (SIDS). Because of its unique situation Tuvalu has selectively adopted into its national development strategy (NSDS) strategies that are relevant and appropriate for Tuvalu. The report is intended for presentation by the government of Tuvalu to the Third International Conference on SIDS in Samoa in 2014.

Global strategies for sustainable development are provided in many international agreements and declarations however this report will focus only on Rio +20, Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and the Mauritius Strategy for Implementation (MSI) of the Barbados Programme of Action (BPOA). Tuvalu is a signatory and party to these international agreements and has been trying to realize the global dream for SD.

Tuvalu has adopted from these agreements those prescriptions that are relevant to its unique situation incorporating them into its national sustainable development strategies (NSDS) *Te Kakeega II* (TKII). Recommendations such as green growth, partnership and others have been incorporated into the TKII, which was crafted through the normal planning processes of integrated planning, investment resourcing, implementation, evaluation and reporting outcomes to the community and stakeholders. SD itself should be seen more as the processes of national planning that produce the SD outcomes rather than just the SD plan document.

Preparations to produce the report began in the second quarter of 2013 with in-country consultations with representatives of island communities, private sector, non-government organizations and government ministries. In a three day meeting convened in May 2013 in the central government office on Funafuti, representatives from the various interests reviewed progress as well as challenges met in implementing sustainable development in the country that are described in the *Revised Te Kakeega II* 2011. The review then identified the gaps and challenges remaining for the country to deal with and include in the report to the government of Tuvalu (GOT) and the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

The implementation framework needs to be mentioned because it is essentially the plan of processes that produces the content of SD reporting. The planning cycle for SD starts with the National *Te Kakeega* Summit where the whole of Tuvalu through their representatives assemble every 5 years to review the performance of the active plan, update and/or create a new *Te Kakeega*. The output of the Summit becomes the *Te Kakeega*, after it is considered and approved by government. The plan is amplified in sector and operational plans of the different sectors and ministries that then proceed to implement their plans at the start of the fiscal year. The Ministry of Finance and Planning monitors and coordinates implementation and reports to government, community and development partners.

An important part of the framework is the consultation with Tuvalu's development partners which is ongoing and maintained through visits to Tuvalu and through telecommunication channels. Every year the Ministry of Finance and Planning liaises with donor partners to inform them about progress on implementing *Te Kakeega*, the emerging issues and policies derived from the implementation experience and the resourcing needs of the NSDS. Donor partners and the government of Tuvalu normally agree on a resourcing schedule that guide them in the next aid period.

## **Taking Stocks of Where We Are**

All the four international SD agreements including the TKII have been reviewed recently providing a clear picture of where Tuvalu is on each of them. The Rio +20 review is provided in the Tuvalu Assessment Report to the Pacific Rio+20 Preparatory Process: National Assessment of Opportunities of Greening the Economies of Pacific Island Countries<sup>1</sup>. The MDG was reviewed in 2010/11 and is also available online<sup>2</sup>. The Barbados Programme of Action and the Mauritius Strategy were evaluated 2010 in a Report on the Assessment of the Implementation of the Barbados Programme of Actions for Small Islands Developing States, and the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the BPOA<sup>3</sup>. The medium term review for the TKII was carried out in 2011 and strategies for the remaining years of the plan recommended by the National Summit on TKII have been approved by government<sup>4</sup>. Other efforts to evaluate the progress of SD in Tuvalu were carried out by the Forum Secretariat

Progress on the implementation of these international agreements has had mixed results only. Tuvalu is one of the countries recognized globally as one of, if not the most vulnerable small island developing state (SIDS) in the world. Through the deliberate policy of its government it continues on the international stage as the spokesperson against climate change and the sea level rise that threatens low lying countries particularly atoll SIDS. It is committed to transforming its national development strategies and policies along the lines of a 'green economy' including the adoption of a 'low-carbon green growth strategies'. In the renewable energy field a target of 100 per cent clean power by 2020 has been set and progress made towards achieving this goal.

## **Millennium Development Goals (MDG)**

Tuvalu has made commendable progress towards fulfilling the MDG goals and targets despite its limited capacities. Of the 8 MDG goals in the updated list, four are on track to be achieved according to the most recent assessment in 2010. This is a 100% improvement over the findings of an earlier evaluation in 2006. The four goals are Goal 2: Achieve universal

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<sup>1</sup> [ftp://202.62.123.106/Tuvalu\\_Assessment\\_Report.pdf](ftp://202.62.123.106/Tuvalu_Assessment_Report.pdf) (Username : guest.user Password : guest2012user)

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.undp.org.fj/pdf/MDG%20Report/MDG%28tuvalu%29%20web.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.sidsnet.org/msi\\_5/docs/nars/Pacific/Tuvalu-MSI-NAR2010.pdf](http://www.sidsnet.org/msi_5/docs/nars/Pacific/Tuvalu-MSI-NAR2010.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> [http://www.pacificdisaster.net/pdnadmin/data/original/TUV\\_2011\\_Midreview\\_ActPlan2015.pdf](http://www.pacificdisaster.net/pdnadmin/data/original/TUV_2011_Midreview_ActPlan2015.pdf)

primary school education, Goal 4: Reduce child mortality, Goal 5: Improve maternal health and Goal 8: Develop a global partnership for development.

Goals 3: Promote gender equality, Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases and Goal 7: Ensure environment sustainability, are assessed as potentially achievable within the MDG timeframe. Progress on achieving these Goals while satisfactory continues to be marred by limited capacities and the behavioural culture of Tuvalu.

### **Goal 1: Eradication of extreme poverty and hunger:**

*Target 1A: Between 1990 and 2015 to halve the proportion of people whose income is less than one dollar a day:* The target is assessed as unlikely to be achieved. Extreme poverty or hardship for Tuvalu is defined as household weekly income below the Basic Needs Poverty Line (BNPL), which is the per capita per week cost of the minimum food needs (2100 kilocalories per adult per day) plus the minimum non-food requirements. For the population as a whole the level of basic needs poverty is estimated to have risen from 17.5% of the population in 2004/05 to 24.8% in 2010. In 2012 people terms this is equivalent to 2,728 people half of whom, other things being equal, need to earn an income above the Basic Needs Poverty Line (BNPL)<sup>5</sup> if Tuvalu is to achieve MGD Goal 1 target 1.

Poverty trend with baseline in 1994 started with 23.2% of the population below the BNPL decreased steadily down to 16.5% in 2003. From 2004 poverty increased and was 19.7% of the population in 2008 according to the last Household and Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES). The reversal is attributed to the global economic crisis and the decline in demand for Tuvalu seafarers in the overseas job market. The economic crisis continued beyond 2008 with slow recovery such that the extrapolated poverty trend by 2012 may well be in the region of 20%-25% of the population.

Income distribution as measured by the Gini Coefficient puts the urban centre (Funafuti) as having a slightly more equal distribution of income (0.37) than the outer islands (0.39) in 1994; the distribution remained largely the same in 2010. However in 2004 the outer islands Gini Coefficient (0.21) showed a more equal distribution than Funafuti indicating probably the effect of higher prices caused by the global food, fuel and latterly the financial crisis. In terms of who beared most of the hardship caused by the global economic crisis, an analysis of inequality found that the share of expenditure by households in the lowest expenditure quintile fell from 10.2% of all expenditure in 2004 to 8.1% in 2010<sup>6</sup>.

*Target 1B: Achieve full productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people.* The challenge for Tuvalu is to find by 2015 productive employment and decent work for at least half of those considered to have income below the poverty line. Worker Productivity<sup>7</sup> trends declined from its highest in 1998 of over \$17,000 to its lowest ever in 2003 of \$10,000. In the four years after that, it stabilised around \$12,000. The Tuvalu MDG Progress Report 2010/2011 noted that this target would be difficult achieve given the

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<sup>5</sup> TTFAC Report in October 2008

<sup>6</sup> TTFAC Report Oct 2008 & 2010

<sup>7</sup> Defined as GDP/number of people in employment

acute structural constraints on domestic and overseas job creation and the openness of the economy hence susceptibility to external shocks as seen in the recent global economic crisis. Employment to total population ratio was 26.8% in 1991 and increased 32.4% in 2004. Employment in the private sector also has grown mostly in the merchandise retail, construction and lodging businesses. The decline by more than 50% of the seafarers' market that once employed 400 Tuvaluans has been cushioned to some extent by the employment schemes of NZ and soon, Australia as well. In term of remittances back to families, a significant shortfall as high as more than 50% of the seafarer highest earnings continue to exist.

More women are now in full time employment in both government and the private sector. In 1991 the female in employment to total population was 18.4% and grew to 22.7% in 2004. In the public service the employment ratio of female:male is approaching equality and favour females in some levels like in the middle to senior management positions. At the top level of Permanent Secretaries 20% are females. There is one female Member of Parliament out of 15 who is also a Government Minister. Decent work is also needed for youth (15-24 years) as well as people with disabilities. A bigger proportion of female youths were unemployed than male youth, the situation improved in 2002 compared to 1991. Very few jobs are available for youth not in school and even fewer decent work is obtainable for people with disability

The MDG Progress Report 2010/11 noted that the target can be met if an 'enabling environment' is created to support private sector development. Budget allocations for poverty reduction like the Special Development Fund (SDF) also should target income generation projects in rural and the Outer Islands. A welfare scheme is also in operation paying \$70 a month to people 70 years and above. Australian and NZ work schemes and recovery of the seafarer market, are the only employment opportunities that Tuvalu can benefiting from. Training standards in the Maritime Training Institute is currently maintained to allow seafarers to take advantage of work openings as and when the market recovers. GOT continues to monitor the work situation in the seafarer market.

*MDG Target 1C: Between 1990 and 2015, halve the proportion of people who suffer from hunger:* This target has been achieved according to the assessment in 2010/11. The population below food poverty line has been halved from 6.7% of the population in 1994 (baseline) to a projected 3.375% in 2015. The prevalence of underweight children below the

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